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ACTION ARA-15
INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
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R 172000Z JUL 80
FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
TO /SECSTATE WASHDC 3841
INFO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN
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E.O.12065: N/A
TAGS: PINT, JM
SUBJECTCT: VIOLENCE REACHES NEW LEVESL IN KINGSTON
REF:KINGSTON 3208

1. BOTH THE GOVERNING PEOPLE'S PNATICNAL PARTY (PNP) AND THE OPPOSITION JAMAICA LABOUR PARTY (JLP) HAS EXPRESSED SHOCK AT THE LEVEL OF VIOLENCE REACHED IN JAMAICA. TWENTY TWO PEOPLE HAVE BEEN KILLED SINCE JULY 13 TWO MORE POLICE STATIONS HAVE BEEN ATTCKED. VIOLENCE HAS REACHED AN UNPRECIDENTED LEVEL IN JAMAICAN HISTORY. THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION HAVE MET TO DISCUSS WAYS TO STEM THE VIOLENCE. THE POLICE AND SECURITY FORCES SEEM POWERLESS TO STOP THE GROWING NUMBER OF MURDERS.

2. (U) THE PAST THREE DAYS HAVE BROUGHT A NEW LEVEL OF VIOLENCE AND BRUTALITY TO THE KINGSTON AREA. THE BLOOD BATH OF THE THREE DAY PERIOD BEGAN EARLY ON SUNDAY MORNING JULY 13. WHEN GUNMEN KICKED OFF THE DOORS OF TWO GHETTO HOUSES IN KINGSTON'S

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GREENWICH TOWN AND KILLED 7 PEOPLE, INCLUDING 3 WOMEN AND 1 CHILD. THE VICTIMS LIVED IN AN AREA WHICH HAS BEEN THE SCENE OF SPORODIC FIGHTING BETWEEN RIVAL POLITICAL GANGS. THE TWO POLITICAL PARTIES ACCUSED EACH OTHER'S SUPPORTERS OF PERPETRATING THE ATTACK.

3. (U) THE POLICE INFORMATION CENTER(PIC) INDICATES THAT 15 MORE PEOPLE WERE KILLED IN SEVERAL INCIDENTS IN THE LAST TWO DAYS. AT LEAST SOME OF THESE MURDERS ARE DINITELY POLITICAL IN NATURE WHILE THE OTHER ARE PROBABLY THE WORK OF CIRMINALS. ON OF THE DEAD, ACCORDING TO THE PIC, WAS FOUND WITH A TAG ATTACHED TO HIS BODY WHICH READ, "JLP TERRORIST TRYING TO TURN BACK PROGRESS". ANOTHER ATTACJ BY SEVERAL ARMED MEN JUST OUTSIDE OF KINGSTON WSAS IN THE VERSION GULLY AREA, A JLP STRONG HOLD. AN EMBASSY JAMAICAN EMPLOYEE WAS TEMPORARILY TAKEN HOSTAGE HER EMPLOYMENT WITH THE EMBASSY WAS NOT A FACTOR IN HER BEING SEIZED IN THIS INCIDENT. WITH THE NUMBER OF MURDERS QUICKLY

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APPROACHING 400 FOR THE YEAR, 1980 IS FAR SURPASSING PREVIOUS YEARS FOR VIOLENT DEATHS.

4. (U) THE POLICE ARE NOT ESCAPING THE NEW HIGHER LEVELS OF VIOLENCE WHICH ARE TEARING AT JAMAICA SOCIETY. THUS FAR IN 1980, 13 MEMBERS OF THE SECURITY FORCE HAVE BEEN KILLED. IN JULY, FOUR POLICE STATIONS HAVE BEEN ATTACKED. THE LATEST INCIDENTS WERE ATTACKS AGAINST THE TRENCH TOWN POLICE STATION AND CENTRAL POLICE STATION, THE MAIN POLICE CENTER FOR THE KINGSTON AREA. A HIGH POLICE OFFICE TOLD EMBASSY SECURITY OFFICER THAT THE ATTACKS WERE NOT AGAINST THE POLICE BUT RESULT OF FIGHTS BETWEEN RIVAL GANGS.

5. (U) REPRESENTATIVES OF BOTH PARTIS HAVE TRIED TO BLAME EACH OTHER FOR THE BREAKDOWN OF LAW AND ORDER. PNP VICE PRESIDENT RALPE BROWN ALLEGED THAT OVER 500

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PNP SUPPORTERS HAD BEEN KILLED IN POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN THE LAST MONTH. EMPLOYING A PHRASE USED BY OPPOSITION LEADER EDWARD SEAGA WHEN THE JLP LEADER WARNED THE GOVERNMENT NOT TO TRY ANOTHER STATE OF EMERGENCY, BROWN SAID THE GUNMEN WERE TRYING TO "LOCK DOEN THE COUNTRY TIGHTFR THAN A SARDINE CAN". HE FURTHER ALLEGED THAT THOSE GUILTY OF THE TACTICS OF VIOLENCE WERF"ADHERENTS AND FOLLOWERS" OF THE JDP. THE JLP SPOKESMAN, TOM TAVARES FINSTON, AN OPPOSITION CANDIDATE IN THE KINGSTON AREA, CHARGED THAT THE SEVEN KILLED IN THE SUNDAT MONRING ATTACK HAD BEEN MURDERED BECAUSE FOUR OF THEM WERE POTENTIAL WITNESSES AGAINST "KNOWN PNP ACTIVITIS" WHO HAD EARLIER BURNED OUT SEVERAL HOMES IN THE AREA. IN AN ATTEMPT TO COOL DOWN THE SITUATION, PRIME MINISTER MANLEY MET YESTERDAY WITH OPPOSITION LEADER SEAGA TO DISCUSS THE VIOLENCE. NO PUBLIC STATEMENT CAME OUT OF THE MEETING.

6. (LOU) COMMENT THERE IS GREAT APPREHENSION AMONG JAMAICAN THAT JULY IS THE MONTH TO KILL WOMEN WITH EIGHT WOMEN MURDERED IN THE LST THREE DAYS THIS PARTICULAR RUMOR IS SURE TO GROW. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT IT IS COMMON PRACTICE FOR THE GUMMEN TO GET TO POLITICAL ACTICIST THROUGH THEIR WOMEN AND CHILDREN. THESE TWO FACTS WHICH EMERGE FROM THE CARNAGE ARE ALARMING. THE DISGUST AND REVULSION OF THE AVERAGE JAMAICAN IS NOT STOPPING THE GUNMEN. THE POLICE AND MILITARY APPEAR INPOTENT IN THE FACE OF ORGANIZATION AND WEAPONRY OF THESE KILLERS. END COMMENT.

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